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AUTHOR Bristow, Clinton, Jr.
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ABSTRACT

Chicago State University's College of Business and Administration, through a grant from the Coleman/Fannie May Candies Foundation, has established an Entrepreneurial Awareness Program for vocational high school students and teachers. Vocational high schools were the first to be targeted because their students are enrolled in courses providing skills that would easily lend themselves to future business ownership. The need for the program arises from a major shift in job opportunities generally and in Chicago specifically. Teachers, assisted by program staff, present curriculum materials that are readily absorbed by students. Presentations by community business persons and members of the university's Small Business Development Center staff, designed to actively engage students in conversations with businesspeople to discuss the rewards of owning and operating a business, are a major part of the program. The program's goals are to have students develop an interest in owning and operating small community-based businesses such as small contractors, retail stores, barber and beauty shops, and franchises, and to make both teachers and students aware of the options and opportunities of entrepreneurship. (Author/MSE)

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CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY

A PROPOSAL FOR

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL AWARENESS PROGRAM

The Options and Opportunities of Entrepreneurship

A PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO

COLEMAN/FANNIE MAY CANDIES FOUNDATION

BY

DR. CLINTON BRISTOW JR., DEAN
CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION
BUSINESS AND HEALTH SCIENCES BUILDING ROOM 602
NINETY-FIFTH AND KING DRIVE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60628-1598
(312) 995-3976

PROGRAM PERIOD: 2 YEARS - SEPTEMBER 1989 THROUGH AUGUST 1991

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AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
I.	ABSTRACT	1
II.	INTRODUCTION	2
III.	THE PROBLEM:	4
	Rekindling the Entrepreneurial Spirit	
	Significant Changes in the Job Market	
	What Will Happen if Nothing is Done	
IV.	OBJECTIVES:	5
	Current Program Objectives	
	Future Program Objectives	
V.	GOALS	8
VI.	THE APPROACH:	9
	A Unique and Practical Approach to Entrepreneurial Education	
VII.	THE METHOD	10

ABSTRACT

Chicago State University's College of Business and Administration through a grant from the Coleman/Fannie May Candies Foundation, has established an Entrepreneurial Awareness Program (E.A.P.). The program heightens entrepreneurial awareness among vocational high school students and teachers. Vocational high schools were the first to be targeted because their students are enrolled in vocational courses that provide skills which easily lend themselves to future business ownership.

The need for this program is due to a major shift in job opportunities throughout the nation and particularly in Chicago. For years young men and women could depend on big business and large manufacturing concerns to provide the bulk of the nation's jobs. This is no longer true. This awesome responsibility now falls more and more on small businesses. This, therefore, is a reason for entrepreneurship to be strongly considered as a career option. Teachers, assisted by the Entrepreneurial Awareness Program staff, present curriculum materials that students can readily absorb. Presentations given by community business persons and members of Chicago State University's Small Business Development Center staff are a major part of the program. These presentations are designed to actively engage the students in conversations with business people, to discuss the rewards of owning and operating a business.

The goal of the program is to have students develop an interest in owning and operating small community-based businesses such as: Small Contractors (plumbers, electricians, carpenters); Retail Stores; Barber and Beauty Shops; and Franchises (Midas Mufflers, Wendy's, Burger Kings, and 7-Elevens). Because of the increasing role small businesses must play in providing jobs, the program is always mindful of the main objective, which is to make teachers and students aware of the options and opportunities of entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

Chicago has a long, rich history as a center for minority entrepreneurial enterprise dating back to 1773, when Jean-Baptise Pointe DuSable established a trading post at what is now known as Wacker Drive and Michigan Avenue. Many other successful minority businesses have been established since and have made an important economic contribution to Chicago. Chicago State University has made a commitment to this tradition. The College of Business and Administration is rapidly becoming the resource center of choice for Chicago's minority business community; as well as the college of choice for Chicago's minority students seeking careers in business.

Business schools throughout the nation have focused almost exclusively on preparing students in traditional areas of business education with little or no emphasis on the needs of small community based businesses, especially minority ventures. Chicago State University's College of Business and Administration employing innovative community outreach programs, has begun to bridge the gap. Along with the Entrepreneurial Awareness Program, the College of Business has established the following special programs to enhance the business climate in the community it has been designated to serve.

Small Business Development Center: Provides free counseling, technical and management assistance to small business people and those desiring to start businesses.
Director, Ms. Esther L. Crawford

Business Hall of Fame: Identifies and honors outstanding business people in the Chicago area.
Coordinator, Dr. Eldridge T. Freeman, Jr.

Small Business Institute: Teams of students in consultation with faculty and SBA SCORE counselors analyze and prepare written case studies detailing the problems and recommending courses of action for select small businesses.
Coordinator, Professor Sandra Shelton.

Entrepreneurial Training Program: Provides instruction in basic business practices to a select group of potential entrepreneurs who are currently unemployed or low-income.
Director, Ms. Isabella Conda

Executive Business Council: Broadens the College's interaction with the business sector and provides students greater access to executives in the business world.
Coordinator, Dr. Eldridge T. Freeman, Jr.

Chicago State University with its unique hands-on practical approach to promoting entrepreneurship, along with its sensitivity to the needs of Chicago's minority business community, has begun positioning itself to take a leading role in broadening the scope of business education in the minority community. As the need continues to grow, so must the university's programs and its ability to serve those needs. These programs have been designed and developed as stepping stones toward the future goal of an entrepreneurship institute whose primary mission will be to serve the special needs of Chicago minority businesses.

THE PROBLEM

Rekindling The Entrepreneurial Spirit

A review of history reveals entrepreneurial spirit and a free enterprise system spawned America's rise to the rank of world economic and industrial leader --- full employment and strong economic growth were the results. Today some feel, the nation's current economic problems are insurmountable. However, entrepreneurs using dedication, tenacity, and creativity as their tools will play a major role in resolving these problems. Throughout the nation, and especially in Chicago, there is a need to rekindle this entrepreneurial spirit, especially among youth.

Although the problems are complex and diverse, slow economic growth and escalating youth unemployment continue to be among the nation's most crucial problems. What is most disturbing about this trend despite a shrinking youth population, under-employment of America's youth is worsening. Even more disturbing is the effect on minority youth in northern, industrial cities like Chicago; they suffer most from this persistent economic problem. According to The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) economic growth declined from 6.6 percent in 1984 to 2.5 percent in 1987, a decrease of over 60 percent. Even though there was a slight improvement in 1986, unemployment remains at historically high levels. Current rates are nearly 20 percent higher than they were in 1979. Another report by The National Committee for Full Employment (NCFE) indicates that in 1986, unemployment for minority youths was more than 51 percent higher than that of non-minority youths. In Chicago this rate was even higher.

Research by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, The United States Department of Labor and many other agencies, indicates that entrepreneurship education provides new areas of opportunity for high school youth, especially those enrolled in vocational education programs. Because these students are learning trades or skills that in a short period of time can be developed into viable, small businesses. In view of this, vocational school educators are being encouraged to incorporate entrepreneurship education into their curriculum. This will result in new businesses being established and increased job opportunities for the nation's youth.

Significant Changes In The Job Market

The economic vitality of the nation is dependent on government, employers, educators, and training institutions recognizing, understanding and adjusting to the changes that are occurring in the job market.

According to the United States Small Business Administration, The State of Small Business: A Report to the President:

- o Big businesses in the United States are going through an era of acquisitions, mergers and stiffer foreign competition.
- o Big businesses are becoming more capital and less labor intensive.
- o Large businesses have become less manufacturing oriented and more service oriented.
- o Between 1981 and 1982, large industry lost 1,664,000 jobs, while small businesses created 2,650,000 new jobs.
- o Many youth are disillusioned, they see no place for them in a "graying" America where jobs are not turning over, because older employees are retiring later.
- o Small businesses furnish two-thirds of the jobs for new workers. Many of these are in the service sector, the traditional doorway to the job market for the young, minority and unskilled job seeker.

What these new economic realities indicate, is that, in order to insure economic growth and future youth employment, there must be an emphasis on self employment.

What Will Happen if Nothing is Done

If the problems are left unchecked the economic consequences would be devastating to America and its work force. Not only will unemployment remain high and slow economic growth continue, but there will also be an inability for the nation to effectively compete in a global economy. The cost of social programs, especially unemployment insurance and public aid will increase. The cost of crime; the cost of fighting crime; and the cost of incarcerating criminals will rise. Minority communities will continue to deteriorate and above all the potential of the nation's human capital will not be effectively utilized.

OBJECTIVES

Providing Entrepreneurship Training to Students and Teachers

Traditional academic training for high school educators has included little or no information about starting, owning, and operating a business. Therefore, a mechanism to teach educators about business needs to be developed and implemented. The core of the Entrepreneurial Awareness Program is to develop and implement this mechanism.

Over the past nine months an approach to entrepreneurship training that effectively deals with the unique problems and characteristics of Chicago public schools has been developed. In developing this approach the primary considerations were, how to provide substantive, entrepreneurship training to the greatest number of teachers and students at a reasonable cost, and within the time frame of a school year. Many other considerations also had to be made. Some of them were:

- o The Chicago Public School System is large and bureaucratic, as a result, disseminating information through traditional channels could be a lengthy process. A more effective method of introducing entrepreneurship education is necessary.

- o Because class size and teacher responsibilities have increased over the years, it is difficult to incorporate new concepts into the curriculum.

- o The student population is economically and racially diverse, a strategy to deal with this issue needs to be incorporated.

- o Some students may be disinterested and lack sufficient educational motivation, therefore a method was needed to generate interest and enthusiasm.

- o Students also have to be made aware of the resources that are available to assist in developing their business ideas and skills.

- o First and foremost students need to be convinced that owning and operating their own businesses is a viable career option.

In setting the objectives for the next two years of the Entrepreneurial Awareness Program, a review of the progress made in the program's initial year is necessary. Utilizing seminars, teacher in-service meetings, classroom activities, lectures by business owners, student assemblies and field trips, the program was able to reach approximately 20 teachers and 450 students in the four targeted vocational high schools: Chicago Vocational, Dunbar, Flowers and Prosser. The program was extremely successful at Chicago Vocational, two student-run businesses were established, a clothing manufacturing company (CMC Mfg. Company) and an auto-body repair shop (AAA Body Shop). Each of the other schools have prepared business plans that the Entrepreneurial Awareness Program hopes to assist in implementing during the next school year.

In order to continue the program's success the following multi-year program objectives have been developed; they are classified as Current Program Objectives and Future Program Objectives. This proposal seeks to fund the Current Program Objectives.

Current Program Objectives:

First Year Activities - September 1989 to August 1990:

A: Expand the program within the schools presently involved, double the number of teacher and student participants over the previous year.

B: Continue to develop, enhance and test curriculum resource material.

C: Provide E.A.P. brochures to high school counselors for dissemination to students and their parents.

D: Plan and implement a summer program at Chicago State.

Second Year Activities - September 1990 to August 1991:

A: Repeat First Year Activities A, B, C, and D

B: Introduce and implement E.A.P. program in other Chicago Public Vocational High Schools.

Future Program Objectives.

Third Year Activities - September 1991 August 1992:

A: Repeat First Year Activities A, B, C, and D

B: Introduce and implement EAP program in traditional Chicago Public High Schools.

C: Introduce and implement EAP program in Chicago Public Grammar schools (7th and 8th grades).

D: Develop a follow-up method to track and assist students' post high school, self-employment efforts.

Fourth Year Activities -September 1992 to August 1993:

A: Repeat First Year Activities A, B, C, and D

B: Merge Chicago State University's College of Business Administration Entrepreneurial Awareness Program, The Small Business Development Center, The Entrepreneurial Training Program and other innovative CSU business development activities into an Entrepreneurship Institute.

GOALS

High school teachers and counselors will understand the need for entrepreneurship education. They will acquire enough information and skills to continue promoting entrepreneurial awareness.

The EAP staff will assist each school in establishing several businesses within the school.

Some students will start their own independent businesses.

Many students will begin to prepare themselves to start businesses.

Most students will begin to assess the possibility of owning and operating their own business.

Teacher and students will be aware of the resources available to assist small business.

The program will expand within each targeted school. Teachers will significantly increase their knowledge of entrepreneurship and they will be better equipped to promote entrepreneurial awareness. The program will become an integral part of their curriculum.

Former students will start or acquire businesses.

Other students will begin apprenticeships with owning their own business as their goal.

Former students after having completed apprenticeships, can begin to draw from the experience and information provided by the program and begin to start businesses.

Students not choosing the entrepreneurial career option will be better equipped for employment, because of their increased understanding of the challenges associated with business ownership.

THE APPROACH

Unique and Practical Approaches to Entrepreneurial Education

The program has many unique features. In order to generate enthusiasm and insure its relevance, the program has and continues to be developed with full teacher and student participation. The EAP staff assists teachers with: (1) Presenting self employment curriculum materials that students can readily absorb. (2) Initiating and assisting students with business related projects. (3) Providing field trips that expose students to entrepreneurship.

One of the most important features of the Entrepreneurial Awareness Program is its use of successful small business persons to promote, establish, and implement the program. Once the program has been established the EAP staff meets weekly or bi-weekly with students and teachers to assist them in developing business projects that are of particular interest to them. Successful entrepreneurs are also utilized as guest speakers. The value of this approach is explained in, Arnold Cooper's book Entrepreneurship: Starting a New Business, "People who start companies are more likely to come from families where parents or close relatives were in business. As a result, the action of starting a new business seems possible --- something they can do." Because many inner city students are from poor or working class households it is unlikely that they have a parent or relative that owns or operates a business to act as their role model. These youth need adult businessmen and women to become their role models.

Theory and traditional learning are very important elements of business development education. However as the EAP program progressed it was discovered that vocational students and teachers were more receptive to the practical, hands-on learn-by-doing approach. Equipped with this information, and nine months of experience the EAP staff and its educational material consultants have developed twelve modules of curriculum resource materials, which enhance the program by providing a more structured approach. What's even more important; the program can now be easily expanded to reach considerably more teachers and students. The EAP staff is now able to assist teachers with the initial implementation of the program,and plan periodic visits to assist them with various stages of the program. This approach will allow the program staff to increase the number of program participants by perhaps fifty percent.

THE METHODS

SEPTEMBER 1989

Objective: Expand the EAP within the schools presently involved, double the number of teacher and student participants over the previous year.

Method: Meet with school principals and other school staff members to discuss a plan of action for expanding the program. A possible method would be to host an in-service meeting with teachers or meet with teachers and career counselors.

Objective: Introduce and implement E.A.P. program in other Chicago Public Vocational High Schools. Determine which schools should be targeted.

Methods: The EAP staff will meet with the Dean and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) staff to establish a list of schools to target

Objective: Begin marketing the EAP to the targeted schools

Methods: The first step will be to send letters along with the EAP informational brochure to principals and career counselors. The literature will provide an overview of the program and explain the need.

The EAP coordinators will follow-up the letters with telephone calls. They will request meetings with the high school principals and career counselors to discuss implementing the program at their schools.

After the principals have consented, he or she will be requested to assign two of their staff members to coordinate with the EAP staff. This will reduce the chances of delaying progress if one individual is absent.

If necessary a number of follow-up visits will be made. If for some reason the program cannot be implemented in a particular school an alternate school will be targeted.

OCTOBER 1989

Objective: Schedule weekly or bi-weekly visits to each school to implement the program.

Methods: Determine which students and staff the EAP staff will work with. Meet with schools to coordinate a visitation schedule that corresponds with their respective school calendar.

Objective: Provide an overview of the program to teachers.

Method: Plan and schedule in-service meetings at each participating school to review the goals and objectives of the program. Introduce curriculum resource materials which was developed for the program. Get their imput and ideas on how best to implement the program in their respective schools and in their individual classrooms. Also introduce and discuss other educational materials available to assist the teacher, i.e. Risk and Reward and Beyond a Dream.

NOVEMBER 1989

Objective: Initiate entrepreneurship training to students and teachers, utilizing a practical, hands-on learn-by-doing approach. Maintain a high level of student and teacher interest and enthusiasm throughout the program. Encourage maximum student participation. Convince students that owning and operating their own small business is a viable career option.

Method: For the purpose of generating enthusiasm, during the initial visit with students the EAP staff will introduce the program by presenting a dynamic small business owner to discuss the rewards of an entrepreneurial career. In order to gain student participation the speaker will evoke questions and responses from students. The EAP staff will also discuss field trips, starting student run businesses and other projects that will generate excitement among the students.

The EAP staff will provide and assist teachers with the implementation of curriculum resource materials, developed especially for this program. They will also provide on-going support.

Arrange and accompany students on field trips that expose them to business opportunities.

Objective: Measure progress and make any necessary adjustments.

Method: The EAP staff will meet with the Dean, and the SBDC staff to discuss and analyze the program's progress and make any necessary adjustments. A report will then be sent to each of the program sponsors for their review and input.

DECEMBER 1989 and JANUARY 1990

Objective: Continue to provide entrepreneurship training to students and teachers, utilizing a practical, hands-on learn-by-doing approach and the curriculum resources materials developed for the program. Continue to maintain a high level of student and teacher interest and enthusiasm. Continue to encourage maximum student participation by allowing the to participate in the decision process. Continue to convince students that owning and operating their own small business is a viable career option.

Method: The EAP staff will continue to:

- Lecture students
- Provide guest speakers
- Introduce business concepts and ideas
- Assist with setting up student run businesses
- Conduct work shops
- Plan relevant field trips
- Assist students in developing business plans
- Provide business resource information and materials

February 1990

Objective: Continue to provide entrepreneurship training to students and teachers, utilizing a practical, hands-on learn-by-doing approach and the curriculum resources materials developed for the program. Continue to maintain a high level of student and teacher interest and enthusiasm. Continue to encourage maximum student participation by allowing the to participate in the decision process. Continue to convince students that owning and operating their own small business is a viable career option.

Method: The EAP staff will continue to:

- Lecture students
- Provide guest speakers
- Introduce business concepts and ideas
- Assist with planning student run businesses
- Conduct student work shops
- Planning relevant field trips
- Assist students in developing business plans
- Provide business resource information and materials

Arrange and accompany students on second field trip.

Objective: Measure progress and make any necessary adjustments.

Method: EAP staff will meet with the Dean, and the SBDC staff to discuss and analyze the program's progress and make any necessary adjustments. A report will then be sent to each of the program sponsors for their review and input.

MARCH and APRIL 1990

Objective: Continue to provide entrepreneurship training to students and teachers, utilizing a practical, hands-on learn-by-doing approach and the curriculum resource materials developed for the program. Continue to maintain a high level of student and teacher interest and enthusiasm. Continue to encourage maximum student participation by allowing them to participate in the decision process. Continue to convince students that owning and operating their own small business is a viable career option.

Method: The EAP staff will continue to:

- Lecture students
- Provide guest speakers
- Introduce business concepts and ideas
- Assist with planning student run businesses
- Conduct student work shops
- Plan relevant field trips
- Assist students in developing business plans
- Provide business resource information and materials

Objective: Open the student run businesses, which have been planned over the last six months.

Method: The EAP staff will assist students with every aspect of opening their businesses.

MAY 1990

Objective: Continue to provide entrepreneurship training to students and teachers, utilizing a practical, hands-on learn-by-doing approach and the curriculum resources materials developed for the program. Continue to maintain a high level of student and teacher interest and enthusiasm. Continue to encourage maximum student participation by allowing the to participate in the decision process. Continue to convince students that owning and operating their own small business is a viable career option.

Method: The EAP staff will continue to:

- Lecture students
- Provide guest speakers
- Introduce business concepts and ideas
- Assist with planning student run businesses
- Conduct student work shops
- Plan relevant field trips
- Assist students in developing business plans
- Provide business resource information and materials
- Continue to assist students with every aspect of their businesses.

Arrange and accompany students on third field trip.

JUNE 1990

Objective: Provide recognition to all EAP participants

- Sponsors
- Schools
- Principals
- Teachers
- Students
- Guest lecturers and others

Method: The program will sponsor an end of the school year ceremony. All program participants will be recognized. The students will receive special recognition for the best business plan, the best business idea and the most profitable and successful school run business.

Objective: Evaluate the program year, determine ways to improve it.

Method: EAP staff will meet with the Dean, and the SBDC staff to discuss and analyze the program's progress and make any necessary adjustments. A report will then be sent to each of the program sponsors for their review and input.

JULY and AUGUST 1990

Objective: Operate a summer program for those students with business ideas that have significant merit.

Operate summer program for teachers wishing to increase their understanding of entrepreneurial education.

Method: The program staff will identify and encourage students with good business ideas to participate in workshops at Chicago State University.

The program staff will establish several summer workshops for those teachers wishing to increase their understanding of entrepreneurship.

Objective: Continue to evaluate the program year to determine ways of improving it.

Method: EAP staff will meet with the Dean, and the SBDC staff to discuss and analyze the program's progress over the past school year, make any necessary adjustments, and begin planning for the following school term. A year end report will then be sent to each of the program sponsors for their review and input.